

# Soldier Enhancement Program: Off-the-Shelf Items for Soldiers in the Field



Modular Sleeping System provided by SEP.

For more than 15 years the Army's Soldier Enhancement Program (SEP) has been providing our soldiers with enhanced, commercial, off-the-shelf items that improve their effectiveness, protection and quality of life. Yet many people have never heard of the program. That may be, in part, because of the unique approach SEP takes to getting soldiers gear that protects them; helps them detect, identify, locate and engage the enemy; and prevail at greater ranges with greater accuracy.

SEP's many past successes include the Desert BDU, ration

improvements, laser eye protection, the desert combat boot, mini binoculars, a universal bore sighting device, sniper kits, the soldier intercom, protective masks, modular weapons system and stabilized binoculars.

Congress established SEP in 1989 to improve lethality, survivability, command and control, mobility and sustainability for all soldiers. SEP pioneered acquisition reform and was a forerunner to the Program Executive Office (PEO) Soldier Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI), which also delivers state-of-the art technology and gear to soldiers on fast track schedules. Today, PEO Soldier, along with the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), manages SEP for the Army. "What's great about the Soldier Enhancement Program is that anyone can submit a proposal and in three years or less we can provide that capability to our soldiers," said Ross Guckert, PEO Soldier's Director of System Integration.

## A Unique Approach: Enhance What Is Already Available

Unlike many military acquisition programs, SEP relies on commercially available technologies, which are then adapted to meet soldiers' specific requirements more directly. Initially, ideas for the SEP items come from soldiers themselves, from field commanders or units with specific needs, and from industry leaders worldwide. The range of items includes individual weapons, munitions, optics, combat clothing, individual equipment, water supply, shelters, and communication and navigational aids. However, the commercial, off-the-shelf starting point must lend itself to being adapted and provided to soldiers in no more than three years.

Anyone can submit a proposal; more than 100 proposals are received and reviewed every year. SEP selection criteria include the following:

- Is the item commercially available, off-the-shelf, right now?

- Have soldiers spent their own money on this item to improve life in the field?
- Will it provide a mid- to long-term solution that can be fielded to a large segment of the Army?
- Does it duplicate an existing program?
- Will it be worn, carried or consumed by individuals in a tactical environment?

PEO Soldier, in coordination with TRADOC System Manager (TSM) Soldier, reviews submissions and decides whether to evaluate an item further, buy or produce it, conduct field testing, or standardize and issue it to soldiers in the field. The SEP Executive Council meets in February and August to approve initiatives for the next fiscal year.

## Current SEP programs include:

- XM-110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System (SASS)
- Close Combat Mission Capability Kit (CCMCK)
- Close Quarters Battle Kit (CQB Kit)
- XM-26 Modular Accessory Shotgun System (MASS)
- XM-1068 12-Gauge Extended Range Non-Lethal Cartridge
- Family of Small Arms Suppressors
- Fuel Handlers Coveralls
- XM-320 Grenade Launcher Module
- XM-104 Non-Lethal Bursting Hand Grenade
- Family of Flashlights
- XM-1022 .50 Caliber Long Range Sniper Ammo
- Advanced Sniper Accessory Kit (ASAK)
- Improved Water Purification Device
- Sapper Pac
- Sapper Leader Pac
- Parachute Electronic Automatic Activation Device (EAAD)
- New initiatives for FY07 include the 12-Gauge Stand-Off Breaching Round, a Flame Retardant Under-Layer System and the Cockpit Laser Pointer.

With the Army of the 21st century immersed in conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, our soldiers need equipment that reflects the latest and best technology our country can offer to help them carry out their missions. And they need it fast. "No other Army acquisition program has been as successful in rapidly getting needed capability to our soldiers," says COL Ernie Forrest of TSM Soldier. Since long before "transformation" was a part of the Army lexicon, SEP has been promoting transformation with an accelerated acquisition process that gets better weapons and other gear into the hands of the soldier; SEP continues to play a key role in the ongoing effort to meet our soldiers' needs.



For more information on SEP, see our website at

<https://peosoldier.army.mil/sep.asp>

To submit a SEP proposal use the form on the following Web

site: <https://peosoldier.army.mil/sepform.asp>